

# UPDATE: TASK FORCE PELICAN

## Thursday - September 15, 2005

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### American Red Cross

- **Important Red Cross numbers:**
  - For Information: 1-866-GET-INFO (1-866-438-4636)
  - To Apply for Financial Assistance: 1-800- 975-7585
  - To Find Friends & Family: 1-877-LOVED 1S (1-877-568-3317)
  - To donate: 1-800- HELP- NOW (1-800-4357-669)

### Department of Health & Hospitals

- An updated number of fatalities has been announced at **474**.
  - This number will be updated as often as possible when deaths are determined to be storm-related.
- DHH has contracted with **Kenyon International Emergency Services** to recover the bodies of deceased victims of Hurricane Katrina.
  - For more information **the contract can be viewed online** at <http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/publications.asp?ID=145&Detail=741>
- Aerial **spraying for mosquitoes** in the Greater New Orleans area continued through today.
  - Spraying in Washington is tentatively scheduled for tomorrow and Friday and Tangipahoa Parish is tentatively scheduled for Saturday.
- **Jefferson parish restaurant owners** wishing to reopen their establishments must call the **Jefferson Parish Health Unit** at **504-838-5140** for an inspection.
  - Upon passing inspection, an official placard will be conspicuously displayed at that establishment.
  - Food establishments that do not obtain the placard will not be allowed to operate.

### **Department of Social Services**

- Currently, there are **318** general population shelters in Louisiana housing **52,640** displaced citizens.
  - o Another five special needs shelters house **318** citizens.
  - o In addition to Louisiana, 49 states now offer shelters to **58,466** citizens for a total population of **111,424** displaced citizens.
- From Sept. 2 - 14, the Office of Family Support has certified **268,596** households (with an average of 3 family members per HH) for total Disaster Food Stamp benefits of more than **\$98.9 million**.
- The Office of Community Services has located **1,500** of the 2,000 foster children in the hurricane impacted area.
  - o There have been **50** displaced children taken into custody, mostly in Texas.
  - o **Five hundred** children have been matched and reunited with their families during the Hurricane Katrina aftermath.
  - o **Twelve** children still are in need of reunification.

### **Department of Education**

- The Louisiana Department of Education Call Center has answered approximately **10,000 phone calls** from concerned parents, teachers and school employees since Hurricane Katrina passed.
- In addition, our website has experienced record traffic logging more than **167,000 hits**.
- Through our Teach Louisiana website, we have registered more than **4,000 teachers** who have been displaced and identified more than **1,600** who are searching for jobs in the areas in which they are seeking temporary shelter.
- Additionally, the Department has set up a temporary office on the first floor of our downtown building to service walk-in's in need of school information, duplicate teacher certificates or just answers to their questions.
  - o More than **800 individuals** have received help.
- Finally, we have preliminary numbers from Louisiana school districts indicating that **22,000 displaced students** have enrolled in operating school systems statewide.
- Additional information can be obtained by logging onto our website, **[www.louisianaschools.net](http://www.louisianaschools.net)** or by calling our toll-free helpline at **1-877-453-2721**.

### **Department of Transportation & Development**

- DOTD is **completing** its assessment of moveable bridges in the affected areas.
- Several contracts have been awarded and work is underway.

### Department of Labor

- DOL has taken over **130,000 new claims** for Unemployment Insurance benefits in Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.
  - o At least 60,000 have been collected from evacuees in other states.
- Persons who filed unemployment insurance claims recently won't find the customary paper check in the mail.
  - o Instead, they will get a **debit card** from DOL that will allow them easy access to their benefits.
- DOL continues to list a schedule of **job fairs** set across the state.
- DOL continues to urge injured workers who were receiving workers' compensation benefits before Hurricane Katrina to call the Workers' Compensation office immediately to update their contact information.
  - o The toll-free number is **1-866-783-5567**.

### Department of Environmental Quality

- NOAA ship Nancy Foster will be taking **water, fish and shrimp samples** in impacted areas from Alabama to mouth of Mississippi River.
- **Samples** from **Lake Pontchartrain** continue to show elevated levels of bacteria.
  - o **Samples** will be taken **twice a week**
- Inside the New Orleans levees, results for samples collected through September 8<sup>th</sup>, show concentrations of **metals and toxic organic pollutants** to be below levels of concern.

### Department of Wildlife & Fisheries

- **Habitat Damage Assessment Continues**
  - o Survey report on parts of St. Bernard Parish by LDWF Marine Fisheries and Fur & Refuge personnel: to determine extent of damage to infrastructure and marsh at ground level.
  - o In the Bayou Bienvenue area, most boat launches and marinas are in poor condition, with many sport boats scattered around parking lots, along with assorted debris.
  - o The Violet Canal served as refuge for a substantial fleet (perhaps 40-50) shrimp and oyster vessels.
    - Most of this fleet seemed to be afloat, though some vessels were listing, or exhibited some structural damage.

- Bayou Terre aux Boeufs was choked with areas of marsh grass and floating mud through the Reggio area, down to about Bayou Lery.
  - Below that junction, the bayou seemed much more passable, though there were still substantial amounts of marsh debris, mixed with debris from destroyed / damaged buildings and boats.
  - Access to these upper stretches of the bayou will probably be impossible for some time to come.
- Nearly all houses and other structures in the Reggio / Delacroix area were substantially destroyed.
  - The few structures remaining took severe damage.
  - The St. Bernard Parish facility in Reggio had a watermark about ½ way up the second floor.
- Marsh damage seemed to be severe in the area surveyed, with substantial clumps of marsh overturned, with the root masses exposed.
  - More was dislocated, landing atop other marsh, in trees, in structures, etc.
- **Marine Fisheries – Administrative Update**
  - Marine Fisheries began the temporary move of Oyster Lease Survey Section records from the New Orleans office to Baton Rouge.
  - That office is expected to be operational within a week.

### **Department of Corrections**

- **Summary of arrests** to date processed at the temporary detention facility in New Orleans (as of 5:15 pm 9/14/2005):
  - Total Misdemeanors:           9 male                           2 female
  - Total State Felonies:           218 males                   47 females
  - Total Federal Felonies:       8 males
- Initial or “**72 hour hearings**” were held for 13 detainees at Elayn Hunt Correctional Center on Wednesday.
  - These are individuals arrested post-Hurricane Katrina and held temporarily at the New Orleans detention facility and then transported to Hunt.
  - Court is scheduled again next Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005.
- Family members inquiring about an inmate’s transfer location (those evacuated from Jefferson and Orleans parishes) may call the following numbers for more information: 225) 342-5935 or (225) 342-3998
- Those offenders under probation or parole supervision who were forced to evacuate due to Hurricane Katrina are asked to check-in with the Department immediately. Probation and Parole agents are manning the following phone lines 1-800-869-2909 or (225) 342-0921; 342-0923 or 342-0933

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